



Testimony of Ashley Zane
Government Affairs Associate, CBIA
Before the Environment Committee
Hartford, CT
February 27, 2022
Testifying in Opposition of:

SB 979: AN ACT PROMOTING ENERGY AFFORDABILITY, GREEN EFFICIENCY, AND GREEN CITIES.

My name is Ashley Zane and I am a Government Affairs Associate for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. CBIA is Connecticut's largest business organization, with thousands of member companies, small and large, representing a diverse range of industries from across the state. Ninety-five percent of CBIA member companies have 100 or fewer employees.

I am here in opposition to SB 979, *An Act Promoting Energy Affordability, Green Efficiency, and Green Cities*. CBIA has concerns with allowing municipalities to adopt their own "stretch" building codes for both residential and commercial construction. Statewide uniform codes allow contractors and tradesmen the ability to operate seamlessly throughout the state. In theory, this bill would require tradesmen to learn one hundred sixty-nine different codes. This could lead to development only in communities without these stricter codes.

Additionally, CBIA supports an incentive-based approach to decarbonization efforts. An unintended consequence of this bill is that some towns will adopt these costly mandates with the intent of keeping affordable housing developments out of their towns. The state is beginning to seriously address the housing supply through new regulation as well as significant financial investment. This bill may be counterproductive to the state's housing strategy while also not improving decarbonization efforts.

CBIA has concerns surrounding new continuing education requirements for plumbers and electricians. With our state currently experiencing a workforce shortage, any additional licensing requirements should not be more restrictive or deter individuals from entering the profession.

Finally, CBIA urges the Environment Committee to refer this bill to the Energy and Technology Committee. The Energy and Technology Committee has "cognizance of all matters relating to the Department of Energy and

Environmental Protection and energy planning and activities” versus the Environment Committee “has cognizance of those matters relating to conservation, recreation, pollution control, fisheries and game, state parks and forests, water resources and flood and erosion control; and all matters relating to the Department of Agriculture, including farming, dairy products and domestic animals” per the Connecticut General Assembly committee descriptions. With the majority of the bill relating to energy transmission, procurement, and energy efficiency standards, the expertise of the Energy Committee should be considered if this bill moves forward.

CBIA urges the committee to take no action on this bill.